

# **LGBT History Project of the LGBT Center of Central PA**

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# The Lancaster Inquirer

Everyone can beat the Feb. blahs at the combined Potluck: Sat. 2/28 (Details Below)

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Jan./Feb. 1998

FREE

compliments of the Pink Triangle Coalition

## Human Relations Ord. Update

When last we wrote about the Lancaster City Human Relations Ordinance, the Pink Triangle Coalition and the Alliance for Tolerance and Freedom had joined forces to petition City Council to investigate renewing an ordinance which would address discrimination based on sexual orientation and marital status. For those of you who are new to the area, the city and county convened to form a City/ County Human Relations Commission to oversee complaints of discrimination as outlined in a Human Relations Ordinance. However, when that particular Lancaster City Council included sexual orientation and marital status as protected statuses in its version of the ordinance, the County Commissioners dissolved the joint commission and established their own to enforce their version of the ordinance which does not cover sexual orientation or marital status. Since Lancaster City does fall within Lancaster County, the county's ordinance does pertain to Lancaster City. However, the city was left with their revised ordinance and no way to enforce it.

This past spring Councilman Nelson Polite convened a special session to hear testimony concerning our petition, and since then a whole series of events have occurred. Councilwoman Billie Jo Herr and the Personnel Committee, with the help of one of our heroes, Andrew Park of the Center for Lesbian and Gay Law and Public Policy in Philadelphia, rewrote the ordinance to remove all references to the defunct joint city/county commission, and establish a largely voluntary city human relations commission which also would have the power to "seek funds and solicit for donations" from the state and federal government and national organizations.

Upon the completion of the Ordinance, Mayor Janice C. Stork contacted Nelson Polite, the chair of the personnel Committee, to ask him to send the potential legislation to the City Solicitor Robert Pfannebecker's office to review its legality. It sat for three months, waiting for him to review it and make recommendations

to Council on whether to make changes, keep it as is, or not pursue it at all. More than that, certain politicians had reportedly requested that the Solicitor wait until after the elections to make a recommendation. After three months, neither the Alliance nor the PTC were interested in waiting until after the elections just for the City Solicitor's comments, and we established a course of action which played out as follows.

At the September 16th Council meeting, Alliance President, Laura Rutt gave an impassioned speech on the need for equal rights for sexual minorities and asked about the status of the potential legislation. At the next Council meeting, Linda Martin, president of Lancaster Area NOW, Alliance board member, and long-time PTC supporter, made a formal request for a report on the status of the ordinance and a request to act on it. At the October 14th meeting, the Personnel Committee reported that the City Solicitor, Robert Pfannebecker had advised the City not to pursue such and ordinance on the grounds that it is not legal to duplicate ordinances in a city and county simultaneously, and that it would be too costly. At the October 28th City Council Meeting, Andrew Park from the Center for Lesbian and Gay Law and Public Policy explained that both of the

**Ordinance** Cont. on back page.

## E-town Voters Just Say No to Candidate Who Had Supported Anti-gay Actions

The only remaining candidate for Elizabethtown School Director who had supported the anti-gay actions initiated by the School Board last year was defeated by the 4 moderate candidates in the November elections. Anthony Miller, running as a Republican, lost to James Rowley, who had only been listed on the Democratic ticket!

**SPECIAL KUDOS** to the civic-minded Elizabethtown residents who donated a diverse set of books to the school library.

## Lancaster Organization has been Dishing it for 11 Years!

One of the longest-lasting organizations appealing to the sexual minority community of Central Pa is the Lancaster Men's Covered Dish Dinner, or the Men's Pot Luck as it is often called. More specifically, the 11-year-old organization is an informal group of men who get together on one Saturday of every month at 7:00 PM for good food and "convivial fellowship and scintillating conversation." to quote the group's bio that one of its organizers, Tony Iacono, provided us. The first Men's Pot Luck was held on November 29, 1986 at the home of Don Mower and Earl Custer, who organized it along with several other men from the Metropolitan Community Church. In November, 1988, the first newsletter was issued and, as a result, attendance soared. Attendees Lael Metzger and Bob Life started scheduling and issuing regular newsletters. From January 1998 through September 1995 Tony Iacono, Lael Metzger, John Johnson, Thom Nolt and Ralph Fisher were in charge of organizing the dinners. Currently, Bob Life is responsible for organizing the dinners, and in January, 1998, a new steering committee will be formed.

So here's how it works. The price of admission is one covered dish along with its recipe on a card.. Couples can bring one covered dish but it should perhaps be a larger one; you can use your own judgement. Hosts and volunteer co-hosts provide napkins, serving utensils, plates, and some beverages. Perhaps the best way to describe the dinners is to quote from the brochure which is available upon request:

*There have been poolside dinners, costume party dinners for Halloween & Mardi Gras, romantic St. Valentine's dinner parties, gorgeous Christmas dinners, tippy St. Patrick's dinners, mystery dinners, picnic dinners (Chickie's Rock, Brickerville, the Garden of the Five Senses). Dinners have been hosted in York, Harrisburg, Mt. Joy, Reading, Lititz, Drumore & Pequea, Mt. Gretna,*



*Newmanstown, and Olde Town, Lancaster. There have been dinners on farms, on country estates, in houses in town and houses in the country, in simple and in sumptuous suburban homes, at a Tennis & Yacht Club, in a Church, in The Cellar, at historic Rock Ford Plantation, in row houses and in fascinating city apartments. Each was an event - a unique and joyful event.*

The brochure goes on to tell of soirees at Conestoga House with Viennese chocolates, moonlight in a deep aqua pool, night-blooming jasmine and, if that wasn't enough to set any sybarite's head spinning, an open bar! However, heavy drinking is not encouraged at the events.

There is no membership fee, however there is a fee of \$4.00 per calendar year for the bimonthly newsletter. Contact Tony Iacono at 717-656-0801 for details, or send a \$4.00 check to Lael Metzger, 304 N. Hoover Ave., New Holland, PA 17557.

In an effort to encourage different gay/lesbian/bisexual groups to more effectively network and work together, the Pink Triangle Coalition and the Men's Pot Luck will co-sponsor the February Covered Dish Dinner on Saturday, February 28. It will be held at the Millesville home of Erica Lutwyn. Yes, Erica is female, and yes, the February Covered Dish will be open to both sexes. There will be plenty of room for all. Her home is in a converted barn, a wonderful space for a gathering The evening will be sure to get the spring started a little early, so bring a friend or meet one there! Contact the Pink Triangle Coalition at 394-6260 or Tony Iacono at 656-0801 for complete details. Hope to see you there!



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Michael Caballero  
Mark Eichelberger

**Ordinance** Cont. from front page. Solicitor's findings were, in fact, incorrect, and advised that state, county, and municipal governments all over the country duplicate human relations ordinances specifically for the purpose of allowing governments to tailor their ordinances to serve their populations (the recent Supreme Court decision *Romer vs. Evans* upholds that right), so that smaller claims could be heard by smaller government agencies. He also advised that City Council rely on its own role as funding administrators and limit the Solicitor's influence to that of legal issues. At the November 11th Council Meeting, Laura Rutt announced the formation of The Coalition for Justice, an organization set up to administer and record incidents of discrimination and violence based on sexual orientation and marital status. At the same council meeting, Nelson Polite, chair of the Personnel Committee, announced that he had set up a meeting between City Solicitor Pfannebecker and

Andrew Park to review the potential legislation. However, at the November 25th Meeting, the Personnel Committee had nothing to report, indicating that the meeting had not taken place.

Where then do we go from here? Forward! There are some things you can do. Join us before city Council on the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of any month at the City Council Chambers in the Southern Market Building and request action. The new Mayor, Charlie Smithgall, has verbally supported the equal treatment of city residents and several members of the next City Council show promise, but without community support *this revised ordinance will not happen.* Also, if you have been discriminated against or know someone who has been, encourage them to call the Coalition for Justice hotline at 717-581-8292 (option #3) and report it. Having evidence of discrimination will make a more compelling case for the adoption of an ordinance. You can make a difference! ▲

## Something's Cooking in the Lancaster Shopping Center

The following is an interview that *Inquery* Editor, Chris Mandros conducted with Michael Cabellero of *Touch of Taste*. His business partner, Mark Eichelberger, regrets having been so busy tending to customers during the holidays that he could not participate in the interview. The Pink Triangle Coalition has been grateful for Michael and Mark's support for several years, and additionally, *Touch of Taste* will be sponsoring a cooking class with the Pink Triangle Coalition during the spring of 1998. Anyone interested should contact us at 717-394-6260 or *Touch of Taste* and ask for Michael or Mark. *Touch of Taste* is located in the Lancaster Shopping Center, where the Lititz and Oregon Pikes converge just off of Rt. 30,



and we don't ask about their sexuality. Of course after their hired it comes out in conversation. Of course in the food service field there are a ton of gay and lesbian people. **Ed:** Which brings me to my next question. How long have you been doing this kind of work?

**M:** I've worked in food service since I was 16. I started out in the front of the house... waitering.

**Ed:** Was that in Lancaster?

**M:** Mostly Hershey and Harrisburg area... that's where I'm from.

**Ed:** Then from that you got into...

**M:** I had my own catering business for years on the side. I guess my official title was Kitchen Manager at Plum Street for one year before I went out on my own.

**Ed:** What would you say has been your greatest obstacle so far?

**M:** Probably to convey my ability to do things to the people with the money, bankers. When I went for the loan to buy the business the loan officer just couldn't understand how someone could want a \$150.00 frying pan. I said to the guy, "Do you go fishing? Wouldn't you rather use a good rod? It just makes the job easier." Mark and I had to go to six different banks before someone had faith in us. I just couldn't believe that with 14 years experience... that they would not take us more seriously. That was very frustrating.

**Ed:** It seems you've proven...

**M:** We've proven that. Now our biggest challenge is proving that the traffic is no worse than it ever was. The Lancaster newspapers preach such doom and gloom about everything in Lancaster.

**Ed:** I should at least mention that you guys are sponsoring a Gay and Lesbian Cooking Class with the Pink Triangle Coalition this spring. Are there any other special promotions that you guys have going on that might be of interest to our readers.

**M:** This time of year it's hard to have special promotions. We're open 10 - 7 Monday through Friday, and on Saturday, 10 - 5. We offer free gift wrap. We have with four full-time employees in the kitchen over 80 years experience. People can call here with any cooking questions.

**Ed:** I see your getting kind of busy so I'll wrap it up with one last question. Do you have any other advice for our readers?

**M:** Yeah. Just don't give up. Hold onto your dream and don't give up.

**Ed:** Great. I'll let you go now. Michael, thanks so much for agreeing to the interview. This was a great interview!

**M:** Thank you. ▲

## In Search of the Q-Spot



Hollister Cole's continuing saga of life and lifeless times in this town of fruited streets. Q-Spot takes you on a Lazy Boy Journey of the loves, lives, and daydreams of people, perhaps familiar — or maybe it's déjà vu.

### VII. LIKE BROTHER AND SISTER

When the morning sun hit just right, it was warm enough to sit on Salina's side porch in October. For at least 20 minutes, it was long enough to drink a soothing cup of tea. Salina enjoyed lounging in her men's pajamas as long as possible. The mock adirondack chair in deep forest, plastic green was surprisingly comfortable.

"Are you studying to join that squirrel family again?" Her roommate let the screen door slam and joined her on the matching chair.

"Kinda. I wish I knew what they were saying with each swish of the tail."

"You know they're just big rats with a tail." Edgar was his real name, but he pretty much went by Pez. When he was younger his head was much too big for his raily body. His close friends called him McMuff, but Salina called him Eggy.

When the two of them were out together they were often taken for brother and sister. He was slightly taller than her, mostly due to his untidy brown curls. His medium, athletic build was brought on by years of soccer practice. He had a head for the game.

Salina met Pez at a party on Vine Street. It was one of those friends of friends parties where she wasn't expecting to have a good time. Didn't really know anyone. The people she thought she met before were worth only six or seven minutes of conversation. But that rare party miracle happened. The one where everyone and everything turns into lots of fun and party flashbacks bounce in and out of your head for the next few days.

One person who helped create the miracle for Salina was Rona. Rona was a medium-tall, slender black girl who must have had ballet training along the way. She had a face like a department store make-up expert who simply pulls her hair back and becomes radiant. Rona was one of the first lesbians that Salina met. Really met.

Rona introduced Salina to Pez that night. They became fast friends in 15 minutes after Pez taught her how to suck down a jello shooter through the teeth. The noise made them fall to the floor in drunken giggles.

Sometime between the jello slurping fit and dropping square chunks of cheese

into the pockets of unsuspecting guests they decided to move in together. Salina's roommate was moving out in three weeks and Pez was graduating with a degree in urban planning. A month later they were roommates. Two weeks later almost bedmates. Almost.

"What time do you have to be in today?" Pez asked.

"Oh, not until twelve." Pulling her long legs out from underneath her, Salina stood for a second, shifting her weight just long enough to slide her chair towards the sun. She sat back down and left out a soothing sigh, closing her eyes to the brightness. She was close enough now to rest her feet on the railing.

"Can you have them play Islands in the Stream today?" Pez asked, warming his blonde-haired thigh with his coffee cup. He was a cool-weather fan, eager to embrace the late morning in white cotton boxer shorts, Adidas flip-flops with socks, and a blue hooded-sweatshirt that zipped. "You know, that Dolly Parton/Kenny Rodgers duet? There was that part that went '...and we rely on each other, uh huh.' I'm pretty sure they looked right into each other's eyes on, 'uh-huh.'" His singing voice wasn't Hee Haw quality, but he could hit the notes and do the standard facial contortions of a pop singer/songwriter. It always put a smile on Salina's face.

"Um, how and why do you know this stuff? A 22-year-old shouldn't be singing lyrics to an obscure love song from the 70's."

"From the sapadellie station we listen to at work," he answered. Pez was working as an assistant manager at a Goodwill store known as a boutique because of the one corner of trendy pant suits and checked shirts just opened from the 30-year-old packaging.

"Well maybe. I'll see what I can do." Salina readjusted a leg. "Sometimes the deejays will ask me if I want to hear anything. You'd be surprised how much influence an intern can wield." Salina had started an internship with WMRP-AM in September, helping mostly with promotions: outlet store openings, bumper sticker sightings at unnamed locations complete with prize giveaways, and the occasional fund raisers for the charity of the week that the FM stations were too busy to do. Sometimes she got to pick the topic for the morning call-in show, *Wake Up To Wally*.

Continued next issue.

**Editor:** Michael, answer for our readers, "What is *Touch of Taste*, what do you do?" Here's a chance for you to promote yourselves unabashedly.

**Michael:** We are full-service caterers, everything from drop-off picnics to sit down dinners. We do it all start to finish. We made Lancaster County Magazine's Top 10 Caterers and we've only been in business for three years.

**Ed:** But you're also a deli and a store. Right? I see some really fun serving bowls and utensils.

**M:** Yeah... a sit down deli... and we have just about anything anyone could ever want, and if we don't, we can order it... we have gift baskets... but we're big in customer service, that goes for everyone here... gift ware as long as it relates somehow to entertaining or the kitchen in some way.

**Ed:** You guys are out gay men who have advertised in the *Inquery* for some time now. How has being identified with the gay and lesbian community affected your business, if it has?

**M:** I don't have to be a gay or lesbian business owner to take out an ad in the *Inquery*. The gay and lesbian market is a huge market, especially with the size of the community in Lancaster, and anyone who doesn't market to it is losing out. But I think I know my business and I expect to be judged by that... my knowledge and how I run my business. I know that's idealistic thinking but it pretty much holds true actually. If somebody needs something, they know where to come.

**Ed:** That's a great response! I totally agree.

**M:** I think we tend to give less credit to people than they deserve. Every now and then we'll see a man pull his wife a little closer and we can laugh about that.

**Ed:** So would it be absurd to think that being out has had any adverse affects on the business?

**M:** We've really only ever had one comment from... well she was just a miserable person. We threw her out of the store and told her not to come back and if her friends were anything like her, tell them too.

**Ed:** That's really funny!

**M:** We deal not only with thousands of customers but a couple hundred sales reps from all over the country and we never have any comments. Sales are up every year.

**Ed:** I know you've had a number of gay and lesbian employees. Did that come about by coincidence?

**M:** Yeah, it was not anything we went looking for. We just look for good people

## Resources

F&M College LGB's & Allies .....399-6192  
G & L Switchboard of Harrisburg.....234-0328  
Interweave (Unitarian Universalist) .....393-11733  
AIDS Coalition Alliance .....394-3380, 394-9900  
Lancaster Gay Helpline .....397-0691  
Millersville Allies .....871-2241  
P-Flag of Lancaster .....299-7043  
Vision of Hop, MCC.....285-9070  
**Pink Triangle Coalition** ..... **394-6260**  
PTC on the web: <http://lanaster.net/community/ptc/>  
and [http://155.68.3.11:80/CampusLife/Organizations/Allies/Gay\\_Lancaster/Home.html](http://155.68.3.11:80/CampusLife/Organizations/Allies/Gay_Lancaster/Home.html) We want to hear from you!

Send any correspondence to:  
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